

H.R. 4580 authorizes, supports the Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS)

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Representative Loretta Sanchez (D-Calif.), along with Reps. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.) and Jim Moran (D-Va.), today introduced H.R. 4580, the Metropolitan Medical Response System Act, to ensure that local emergency management plans are properly integrated and coordinated in the event of a terrorist attack using a Weapon of Mass Destruction (WMD) such as a nuclear bomb or biological weapon, natural disaster or disease outbreak.

H.R. 4580 would fund the Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS), the only federal program that integrates local emergency management, law enforcement, and health and medical systems into a coordinated response to a mass casualty event. This program is uniquely suited to mobilize these multiple agencies across jurisdictions, as well as nongovernmental organizations and private enterprises, which are all critical responders during catastrophic emergencies.

"In order to maximize the effectiveness of our response to a significant natural disaster or terrorist attack, we have to coordinate the actions of our federal, state, and local first responders," said Rep. Sanchez. **"I'm proud to be an original cosponsor of H.R. 4580, which takes concrete steps to mitigate the consequences of an attack or disaster by ensuring our fire fighters, hospital administrators, and other first responders have a system of communication in place before an incident occurs**
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"First responders and medical personnel are our first line of defense in the event of the unthinkable," said Markey. **"We need to ensure that we provide them the resources needed to save lives in the aftermath of a terrorist attack, natural disaster or disease outbreak. Moreover, we must improve our emergency coordination and planning before disaster strikes, so that our police officers, fire fighters, medical personnel and other responders can act in an efficient, organized manner when every minute counts. The MMRS will help us do just that**
," Rep. Markey concluded.

MMRS was established in the wake of the deadly release of sarin nerve gas in a Tokyo subway and the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Building in Oklahoma City in 1995. The program

provides funds to local jurisdictions in 43 states to enhance emergency planning, communication, training, equipment, and stockpile pharmaceuticals.

"Local law enforcement and health professionals are often the first to arrive at the scene of a mass casualty event, and they must have the essential resources to meet this challenge ," said Rep. Moran. **"Funding through the MMRS program will ensure localities have the necessary equipment, personnel, and training to respond effectively to any natural or manmade disaster ."**

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